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REVIEWS AND ABSTRACTS OF LITERATURE

Probleme der Entwicklung des Geistes. Die Geistesformen. SEMI MEYER. Leipzig: Verlag von Johann Ambrosius Barth. 1913. Pp. iv + 429.

Here is a serious valuable discussion of practically all the deeper questions that to-day confront pioneers in the land of psychology, a discussion carried forward with important logical and metaphysical problems occasionally in mind. Of books on mental development, it treats the widest range of topics and is often most penetrating, although students of psychology will miss many familiar captions from the table of contents. The treatment has both originality and charm, the latter consisting of a steady unfolding of the argument and frequent sympathetic pictures of actual mental life. Many problems are stated and deliberately left unanswered, but I lay down the book with the reflection: Here is a new whole picture of the mental life, one that makes genial important contributions to current discussions in psychology and logic. It contains no specific references and no bibliography, but doctrines from practically the entire literature of the subject are alluded to and discussed.

Meyer disclaims any world-view that might influence his treatment, except the convictions, that in this world something can really begin to be, and that the human mind is not the goal toward which all development points. Every bearer of spiritual energies possesses, in the form of mental life with which it is endowed, as good a goal of development as does man. Development is always complete, but never at an end. It is nowhere constant; it nowhere results from permanently active forces comprehended in life itself; it is not in itself a property of life. Development is creation, not an unfolding of given or implicit possibility. There is a struggle for existence. The world is not a well-ordered unity, but a world in which accident gives rise to new creations which are the variations out of which the life-struggle selects. Practise is not the highest functional principle of development, and it is the last force to be regarded as creative. Practise is a form of learning, of memory-functioning, and between memory and heredity there is no bridge. Practise establishes more firmly relations of movement to stimulation, but it possesses no power to improve performances of any kind; and no function can create its organ through practise. Performances are improved through ever finer discriminations and ever farther reaching adaptations of movements to ends held in view. That every form of activity becomes easier and better by repetition is a profound error.

The origin of consciousness is bound up with organic evolution, and to read into primitive organisms the volitions of mature men, or the consciousness men have of their activities, is wholly unwarranted by facts. On the other hand, the life of an organism and the work of a machine are not comparable. The fundamental functions of consciousness are discrimination and choice; and consciousness consists of its phenomena. It is hardly possible to determine where consciousness first appears. Its distinguishing mark has not yet been found, and it may well happen that a proof will one day be forthcoming that there can as little be such a thing as a squaring of the circle. In general, the capacity of any creature, in the light of experience, to change his response to stimulation can be said to be the work of consciousness, and many investigators incline to regard this as its lowest form. Memory is not the mark of consciousness. There must be an original consciousness consisting of a timeless- and spaceless-sensing, that assists in simple discriminations between present stimulations, before memory can come and mediate a comparison with earlier experienced impressions (Eindrücke).

First is the world, and then comes man; but he comes not as a goal and completion; he comes as a bit of life, as a tiny bit of the whole of life, and as a disappearing appearance in the driven incidents of the world, possessed of a mind endowed only to meet the needs of life and not to unite in itself the streaming tendencies of the universe. The world does not mirror itself in our consciousness: its forms are created as aids of life: sensations, the earliest building stones of consciousness, are primarily signals, and further, the usufruct of intensities of stimulation that owing to their diminutive energies could not move the body as a whole. There are certainly, in the great world of life, more forms of sensation than we possess, and it is possible that certain creatures are more richly endowed than we are. Our senses are accidental creations, mere outposts, whose significance is derived entirely from their connections with other and more elaborate modes of response. Knowledge of the world arises solely as the after effect in consciousness of our movements.

Feeling arises out of a conflict of inner tendencies and demands. Without such a conflict, no function for feeling is recognizable and there is no aim. For that reason feeling is a relatively late acquisition of the mental life. There is something in the James-Lange theory of the emotions, but feeling is no mere sensation of bodily processes; for the body could not evaluate, there is no mechanism of the brain for it. With evaluation begins the realm of purely mental (or spiritual) laws. The problem of the origin of feeling points unmistakably to behavior, not to stimulation, for its solution; feeling must find possibilities of movement already there. As the basis of valuation, and so of choice, it gives to the mental context its character and coherence.

Instincts do not arise from volitions, and the word impulse only names, it does not explain, the connection between stimulation and response in them. The problem of the origin of that connection is for us unsolvable. Feeling comes later than sensation and perception, pain being a relatively recent acquisition. Feeling takes the place of instinct as a guide of movements, and man behaves only through feeling. The very few instincts that remain to him must be coupled with feelings in order not to disappear from life. Animals are probably not moved by feeling to protect themselves. Expressive movements of course preceded the feelings they express.

Memory appeared late in the animal series. Recall is a special case of memory, not the conscious side of all of it. Memory underlies our total knowing, but knowing is timeless, and recall involves the time-relation. There is a timeless memory upon which we rely all day long, and no lower animal possesses a temporal memory. Memory is nothing less than it is a time-consciousness. Memory works mechanically, not according to mental laws: it is only capable of providing a material for the activity of consciousness, and again, of preserving the results of mental activity. The actual course and content of memory is in part the result of selection and interest, which are mental functions; but these are not in any sense functions of memory. Our thinking is of a character to be served by the brain-mechanism that underlies memory, and where that fails the mind has no means of filling out the breach.

Will is not the mover of the body: the latter moves itself: its movements must have already been constructed either in the development of the species or in the life and learning of the individual: the will simply takes in hand the work of making behavior significant to the agent. No movement is thinkable without some stimulation *ab extra,* for will can not take the place of stimulation. An end is the essence and actual being of will, and there is no will where there is no opposition to the even course of customary activities. Man is dependent upon acquiring will, for which he is chiefly indebted to culture, *i. e.,* to the spiritual community for which he is born. We do not will our movements, we will results, and results do not rest on knowing how to move. We note the result, remember it, and even connect it in perception with the stimulation that gave rise to the movement; but no direct way leads from the subsidence of hunger as a result of eating to the construction of the eating movement. There are no unconscious or subconscious mental activities. Skill and technique depend upon acquiring an appropriate perception of the object, and this remains in memory like any other temporal and spatial combination. Of special importance are inherited adjustments due to the direction and distance of the source of stimulation, especially those connected with sight and hearing, for, to the building of movements, they contribute the indispensable space element. It is a result of these movements, known only to scientists, that we construct a unified visual space into which we translate all space-experience.

The mechanization of conscious processes through fixing them by practise is clearly possible; while consciousness, thus freed from the work of carrying on these acts, devotes itself to other attainments, and so multiplies its effects. Consciousness thus abbreviates, while memory supplements and completes, its activities. The aims that occupy the attention in volition continually undergo reconstruction in these ways: Every step of growth in mental media brings new aims in sight. Hence, no aim, such as the aim of any act of ours, precedes evolution.

Perhaps the most interesting section of Meyer's book is devoted to complementation and abbreviation (*Ergänzung und Verdichtung*). Here the work of memory is represented as linking together, always in the service of behavior, not images, but things and occurrences, and thus providing the materials on which conscious activity works. The linkages are not mysterious mental bonds of association, but activities of a mechanical type in which our bodily-mental organism is either directly or indirectly involved. Memory produces linkages in the contents of life itself, and

Meyer questions whether images are in themselves of any importance in memory activity. Memory can only work the past into the present situation, the most useless definition of it being the power of representing absent things. Memory saves us from beginning at the beginning of experience every time we do anything. We need above all the vast supplementation of the present that comes from knowing and remembering the experience of predecessors, the use (*Gebrauch*) of the object (*Gegenstand*) being the fundamental relations to which all its properties are subordinated. Movements are constructed by the mind itself only on the highest planes of life.

Memory does not in the least account for or create unity, unification, and judgment. Feeling, interest, and will, the conscious setting of ends, are appealed to to account for the unity of the thing in perception and, I may as well add, the unity of consciousness and personal identity. The unification of the thing in perception is rather a presupposition of memory activity than one of its performances: and yet, unification is not "the work of the mind" so much as a result of many factors, among which memory must be counted. In dealing with the problem of unity, the temptation is especially great to assume in an explanation what is to be explained (as Kant did). It is not the mind that produces unities by its activity, but consciousness consists of unitary constructions: out of the given contents, taken together with those supplied by memory, new unities develop by a law of their own. Unity is for consciousness a necessity, but it is no force that can create anything at all. It is indeed a limitation. The forms of unification, such as simple combination and blending, abbreviation (*Verdichtung*), simplification and representation, are not forms of the activity of consciousness; they are results which we are conscious of. The correlating and organizing processes that result in unity are extra-conscious: they are not even mental. The important side of the unity of consciousness is the attitude of the organism toward the outer world. This unity of attitude toward things is an effect of nervous functions, and their unity is a presupposition of the much discussed unity of consciousness. Certain it is that the connection of stimulation-reception to response must take place through nervous transmission; and just as certain is it that mental unity is something more than a process organized like a nervous function. The unity outward can only spring from a peculiar inner unity, which at bottom is volitional. The will consists in nothing but the fact that one thing is subordinated or suppressed by another; and in no one person could one will get along with another, for their demands would struggle for precedence. Most of the difficulties of the problem of unity of consciousness result from the fact that all contents of experience are transformed into things by being thought. (We who speak English can only envy the users of a language containing such words as *Verdinglichung*.) Our will each moment is our self; our whole individuality is a will-unity (*Willenseinheit*); but the unity of the will is nothing but the sum of our bodily and mental functions concentrated upon an end. So long as oscillation continues, the personality shows its unity just in the necessity of coming to a conclusion. There is no partial will, for will is only capable of a complete unity. And yet, only a living being that from the first prepares to build a spiritual community could with success, and then with such enormous success, enter into a life directed and judged according to ends. A solitary individual could never acquire such knowledge as to render his life secure, and even the step of individuating the simplest thing presupposed at least the beginning of a community in which one imitates another. And the first *thing* is an instrument, in which one property predominates over all others.

Space-perception begins with the apprehension of the directions in which we approach things and see them affect us. The senses are from the first accommodated to the direction of stimulation, and this accommodation is a directing of the attention toward the thing. The space of science, with its three dimensions, its continuity and uniformity, its conceivable emptiness, its endlessness and endless divisibility—scientific space is a concept which a man who does not think scientifically is not able to construct at all. We never perceive space of this sort: we perceive the location of a thing. And there is no end to the number of directions possible to stimulations and movements. There is no special space-sense, although vision predominates in space-perception. The controversy whether space-perception is inherited is an idle one: many of its conditions are inherited, but every space relation is an experience. It is not a thing, although psychologists and other scientists alike tend to think of the space of science as a thing. Primarily it is nothing but the measure and direction of movements.

Experience is primarily timeless; in joining an earlier event with the present, it merely works the past into the present: through memory, the past becomes again effective, and so a piece of the present. A time-consciousness is a purely human possession; and, for that reason, no animal has a genuine life course or destiny. The time-consciousness does not rest upon the consecutive flow of mental states. A creature that adapts himself only to the immediate present constructs no time-consciousness. The occasion for comparing a present situation with any other can only arise out of an urgency to use the present for the activity of another time; and, only a being that himself sets ends for his actions comes into a position to order his experiences in this way. The beginning of the time-consciousness is not at all the antithesis of past and present: the present is first contrasted with a future held before the eyes. In retrospect, when the future has become the present, the former present has become a past. Only one who makes plans for the future looks back into a past (p. 394). Things and events do not exist *in* space and time, space and time exist in them.

The attempt in a review to give a book of such scope as this one is perhaps foredoomed to failure; and yet, such an attempt, in this case, seemed more worth while than any brief discussion of special points. Meyer maintains that mental development will always be a field of controversy, and what might be called the pluralistic biological tychism of the work is sure to provoke opposition. Especially the dualism of "mechanical" memory activity, instinct, and habit in antithesis to mental activity with its laws of discrimination, evaluation, and choice, seems to be an intolerable gap in the theory. But the book, as a whole, rings true. Especially those who are interested in the instrumental view of consciousness, and the behaviorists, with their new philosophy of mind, should welcome it. And Meyer's contention, that any doctrine of human knowledge that does take mental development into account must be judged unfruitful, is supported by a weighty mass of evidence in this book.

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The Yoga-System of Patañjali, or the Ancient Hindu Doctrine of Concentration of Mind, Embracing the Mnemonic Rules, Called Yoga-Sūtras, of Patañjali, and the Comment, Called Yoga-Bhāshya, Attributed to Veda-Vyāsa, and the Explanation, Called Tattva-Vāiçāradī, of Vāchaspati-Miçra. Translated from the original Sanskrit by JAMES HAUGHTON WOODS. Harvard Oriental Series, Edited by Charles Rockwell Lanman, Vol. 17. Cambridge, Mass.: The Harvard University Press, 1915. Pp. xlii + 384.

This contribution to the Harvard Oriental Series, by Dr. Woods, professor of philosophy in that university, continues the tradition of austere scholarship manifest in earlier volumes. No translation of either the "Comment" or the "Explanation" has before been published in America or Europe, and since the bare Sūtras can be crowded into ten pages of text, by far the major portion of this solid tome is unique in the West. Without it as a source there can hereafter be no serious study of the Yoga philosophy unless by the few who are willing to rely on their own reading of Sanskrit.

To the Yoga Sūtras Dr. Woods ascribes a date as recent as A.D. 300–500, the commentary being placed at 650–850 and the sub-commentary at about A.D. 850. This does not mean, however, that there was no Yoga before Patañjali wrote. In order to get the full meaning from the text one needs to practise upon it some of the Yoga methods of concentration. Besides the ordinary difficulties of entering into an alien philosophy are the special ones of catching abnormal mental experiences. Impossibility of accurate reproduction in words is a trait of mystical conditions the world over. A cynic falling upon some parts of the commentaries would say that they were intended to befog the Sūtras. This, however, is not quite fair; they contain much that is illuminating. But they multiply manifold the problems of exegesis, and it is well understood, of course, that a native Oriental commentator, although standing nearer the original author, is often less able to judge his meaning than is the modern critic.

Yoga is familiar by name and in general character as one of the six orthodox philosophies within Hinduism. Very imperfectly we might distinguish it from the two others most celebrated by saying that, while the Vedānta follows pantheistic idealism and the Sānkhya atheistic dualism, the Yoga is a mildly theistic variant of the Sānkhya, but is chiefly concerned with ways and means of self-hypnotism. Yoga, a word cognate